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**AFRICAN-AMERICAN FILM CRITICS ASSOCIATION
SELECTS “TREE OF LIFE” AS TOP FILM OF 2011**

Organization Will Present Awards at Annual Live Event

Los Angeles, CA (December 12, 2011) – The African-American Film Critics Association (AAFCA) has named “The Tree of Life” as the Best Picture of 2011. Directed by Terrence Malick, the Fox Searchlight release captured a majority vote by the organization, which is comprised of African-American media professionals from across the nation. The organization will formally present this year’s honors during a private dinner on Sunday, January 8, 2012 at the Light Space Studio at the historic Helms Bakery.

Woody Harrelson was selected as Best Actor 2011 for “Rampart.” Viola Davis earned AAFCA recognition as Best Actress 2011, and her co-star Octavia Spencer was selected as Best Supporting Actress 2011. Albert Brooks earned Best Supporting Actor 2011 recognition for his performance in “Drive.” Steve McQueen was named Best Director for “Shame,” and “I Will Follow” by Ava DuVernay was selected for Best Screenplay. “Pariah” was named Best Independent Film, with “Kinyarwanda” named Best Foreign Film. Adepero Oduye was honored for Break-Out Performance for “Pariah.”

“Displays of the fragile nature of humanity are on big display among the film titles that we selected for 2011,” says Gil Robertson IV, AAFCA, President and Founder. “If you closely examine the films that AAFCA has selected this year, you will find stories about people who are wrestling with their own humanity in all its forms. From the loss of a cherished loved one, to sexual addiction and social corruption, our selections this year individually and collectively make a strong statement on life’s challenges that all of us may face.”

AAFCA 2011 Film Selections

AAFCA's Special Achievement Awards for career achievement went to Richard Roundtree, Hattie Winston, George Lucas and Sony Pictures Entertainment.

The organization's Top Ten list of films includes "The Descendants," "Drive," "My Week With Marilyn" and "The Help." "The film industry should be applauded for the 'real stories' brought to the screen," says AAFCA's East Coast V.P. Daryle Lockhart, owner of Black Box Office.com. "Hopefully through these stories will come a greater empathy and understanding for life changes that we all may experience."

A complete list follows.

The African-American Film Critics Association's Top Ten Films of 2011 are as follows in order of distinction:

1. "The Tree of Life"
2. "Drive"
3. "Pariah"
4. "Rampart"
5. "Shame"
6. "Money Ball"
7. "The Descendants"
8. "A Better Life"
9. "My Week With Marilyn"
10. "The Help"

Best Actor	Woody Harrelson, "Rampart" (Millennium Entertainment)
Best Actress	Viola Davis, "The Help" (Dream Works Pictures)
Best Supporting Actress	Octavia Spencer, "The Help" (Dream Works Pictures)
Best Supporting Actor	Albert Brooks, "Drive" (Film District)
Best Foreign Film	Alrick Brown, "Kinyarwanda" (AFFRM)
Breakout Performance	Adepero Oduye, "Pariah" (Focus)
Best Director	Steve McQueen, "Shame" (Fox Searchlight)
Best Screenplay	Ava DuVernay, "I Will Follow" (AFFRM)
Best Song (Sony Pictures)	Jason Reeves & Lenka Kripac, writers, "The Show" from "Money Ball"
Best Independent Film	"Pariah" (Focus)
Best Documentary	"The Black Power Mix Tape"

Special Achievement: George Lucas, (Cinema Vanguard); Richard Roundtree, (AAFCA Legacy); Hattie Winston (AAFCA Horizon) and Institution, Sony Pictures Entertainment

About AAFCA

The African American Film Critics Association (AAFCA) is the only organization of African American film media professional. Founded in 2003, AAFCA's members represent a geographically diverse cross-section of media covering the cinematic arts. The organization honors excellence in cinema by creating awareness for films with universal appeal to black communities, while emphasizing film about the black experience and those produced written, directed and starring performers of African descent. The association actively reviews the quality and standard of black talent, content and media coverage. AAFCA also supports the development of future black film critics and filmmakers. AAFCA is based in Los Angeles.

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